

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
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P R 291447Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6736
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USIA WASHDC
NSC WHITE HOUSE

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USIAC FOR IOP/M

EO 11652: NA
TAGS: EG, US, IS, UR, UK
SUBJ: ATHERTON COMMENTS, ISRAELI REACTIONS TO US ME STATEMENT
RECEIVES MAJOR PRESS COVERAGE

REF (A) CAIRO 10638 (NOTAL), (B) CAIRO 10784 (NOTAL),

SUMMARY: PRESS HIGHLIGHTS FAVORABLY JUNE 28 ATHERTON COMMENTS
(NOT NECESSARILY ACCURATELY QUOTED) AND FEATURES "VIOLENT"
ISRAELI REACTION TO JUNE 27 STATE DEPT STATEMENT. PALESTINIANS
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UNHAPPY, BUT MOST EGYPTIANS PLEASED WITH US STATEMENTS. EDITORIAL
COMMENTARY REFLECTS DOUBT THAT ISRAEL CAN BE BROUGHT QUICKLY
TO NEGOTIATING TABLE. END SUMMARY

1. JUNE 29 AKHBAR REPORTED AT LENGTH ON ASSISTSEC ATHERTON
COMMENTS UNDER HEADLINE "WASHINGTON AFFIRMS RIGHT OF PALESTINIANS
TO PARTICIPATE IN SETTLEMENT". REPORT PICKED UP FOLLOWING

(SINCE WE DO NOT HAVE FULL TEXT UNABLE TO DETERMINE IF ATHERTON ACCURATELY QUOTED):

A) PALESTINIANS: PALESTINIANS MUST PARTICIPATE IN SETTLEMENT AND FEEL THAT SETTLEMENT HAS SATISFIED THEIR ASPIRATIONS. NO HOPES CAN BE TOTALLY SATISFIED, BUT THEY MUST AT LEAST FEEL THEY HAVE HAD FAIR SHAKE. USG DOES NOT INSIST THAT ESTABLISHMENT OF PALESTINIAN HOMELAND MEANS INDEPENDENT STATE. US PREFERS HOMELAND LINKED TO JORDAN BUT POSSIBILITY OF STATE OF THEIR OWN IS STILL THERE.

B) JERUSALEM TERRITORIES: FUTURE OF CITY OF JERUSALEM MUST BE PART OF NEGOTIATING PROCESS. "US CONSIDERS DIVISION OF CITY ODD AND REPUGNANT". ARAB PERCEPTION THAT THEY HAVE ALREADY MADE TERRITORIAL COMPROMISE BY ACCEPTING EXISTENCE OF ISREAL, THEREBY GIVING UP CLAIM TO TERRITORIES OF PALESTINE, MUST BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT.

C) ISRAELI SECURITY. US HAS MORAL COMMITMENT TO SURVIVAL OF ISRAEL BUT STABILITY OF ARAB WORLD IS IN US INTEREST. US HAS NO DEFENSE PACT WITH ISREAL WHICH WOULD ENTITLE ISREAL TO DEMAND US TO SEND FORCES TO ME IF ISRAEL THREATENED. ISREAL CAN DEFEND ITSELF. QUESTION OF DIRECT US INVOLVEMENT ON GROUND WOULD POSE HARD, GRAVE DECISION FOR USG.

D) US-SOVIET ROLE. US ROLE IS THAT OF CATALYST. VANCE TOUR OF ME WILL SEEK AGREEMENT FOR PROCEEDING WITH GENEVA CONF AND EXAMINE QUESTION OF REPRESENTATION AT GENEVA. SOVIETS FORMERLY TENDED AGGRAVATE AND POLARIZE SITUATION, BUT TODAY MAINTAIN CONSULTATIONS ON PEACE PROCESS WITH USG.
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2. ISRAELI REACTION: OTHER DAILIES FOCUSED MAINLY ON "ISRAELI CAMPAIGN AGAINST AMERICAN STATEMENTS" (AKHBAR RED BANNER). BROAD COVERAGE CALLED ISRAELI REACTIONS TO JUNE 27 STATE DEPT VIOLENT. ISREALI PRESS SAID TO EXPECT CONFRONTATION BETWEEN CARGER AND BEGIN OVER WHAT TEL AVIV PERCEIVES AS USG RETREAT FROM EARLIER POSITION AND AS EROSION IN US CONCEPT OF PEACE. DAYAN DESCRIBED AS DESPERATELY SEEKING SAVE US-ISRAELI RELATIONS BY BACKING DOWN FROM STATEMENTS INDICATING REFUSAL WITHDRAW FROM OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. "ISREALI OFFICIALS" SAID TO COMMENT THAT STATEMENT LESSENS CHANCES FOR PEACE AND ENCOURAGES EXTREME ARAB DEMANDS.

3. BRITISH/EC: FRONT PAGES ALSO CARRY JUNE 28 BRITISH GOVT "ENDORSEMENT" OF STATE DEPT "WARNING TO ISRAEL" THAT IS MAY HAVE TO GIVE UP ALL OR MOST OF 1967 TERRITORIAL GAINS AS PART OF PEACE SETTLEMENT. REPORT QUOTED STATEMENT'S ADHERENCE TO UN RES 242, "OF WHICH THE QUESTION OF WITHDRAWAL IS CENTRAL PART", AS WELL AS "REGRET OVER ANY ACTION WHICH MIGHT IMPEDE NEGOTIATIONS, PARTICULARLY ISREALI POLICY IN ESTABLISHING SETTLEMENTS IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES." AT SAME TIME, PAPERS AGAIN REPORT EXPECTATIONS THAT THE PROBLEM WILL BE IMPORTANT ITEM ON

AGENDA ON EC SUMMIT IN LONDON WITH STRONG PRO-ARAB STATEMENT TO FOLLOW.

4. EDITORIAL COMMENT: GUMHURIYYA AND AKHBAR EDITORIALS FIND ISRAEL STILL EAGER FOLLOW LINE OF PROCRUSTINATION IN EFFORT "CREATE NEW FACTS", THROUGH SETTLEMENTS IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES WHICH IN TURN MIGHT CREATE "NEW REALITIES". ISRAELI EXTREMISM SOLE OBSTACLE TO PROGRESS. DELAY IN WITHDRAWAL WILL ONLY ADD TO "EXPLOSIVENESS OF SITUATION". ISRAELI OBSTRUCTIONISM SHOULD BE TRANSLATED INTO INCREASED PRESSURE ON ISREAL TO ABANDON INTRANSIGENCE. US, PARTICULARLY CARTER AND VP MONDALE, NOW ENGAGED IN PROCESS OF MOBILIZING US PUBLIC OPINION. REGULAR AND INTENSIFIED DECLARATIONS DESIGNED CREATE PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR US IN IMPENDING CONFRONTATION WITH ISREAL, WHICH IS PART LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF US EFFORT ESTABLISH PEACE IN ME. THIS IS UNPRECEDENTED US ATTITUDE. EDITORIALS SAY US STATEMENTS HAVE FOLLOWING AIMS: REJECT BEGIN POSITION THAT WEST BANK IS PART OF ISREAL; STRESS THAT FAILURE TO MAKE PROGRESS THIS YEAR INVITES CATASTROPHE; AND EMPHSIZE REAL PEACE (NOT "SECURE BORDERS") IS ONLY MEANS OF GUARANTEEING SECURITY OF ALL COUNTRIES IN REGION. US STATEMENT OF JUNE 27 IS POSITIVE STEP, BUT CANNOT BEAR FRUIT AS LONG AS ISRAEL "CONSIDERS EXTREMISM TO BE ONLY MEANS OF DEALING WITH ARABS."

5. PALESTINIANS UNHAPPY: VOICE OF PALESTINE BROADCAST FROM CAIRO DESCRIBES US WARNING TO ISRAEL AS TRIAL BALLOON. US MERELY ATTEMPTING DISTRACT ATTENTION FROM TRUE US ROLE, WHICH CAN BE CLEARLY DISCERNED IN INCREASE IN US MIL AID TO ISREAL AND US SUPPORT FOR ISREALI OCCUPATION, EXPANSIONISM, AND AGGRESSION.

6. EGYPTIANS HAPPY: ACCORDING TO AFR REPORT FROM CAIRO, EGYPTIAN GOVT CIRCLES PRIVATELY CONSIDER US JUNE 27 STATEMENT "EXTREMELY POSITIVE" AND ARE SAYING THEY "HAVE NEVER HEARD FROM WASHINGTON SO PRECISE AND POSITIVE A STATEMENT OF POSITION ON ME."

7. COMMENT: PRESS CASTING OF US IN HIGHLY POSITIVE LIGHT ACCURATELY REFLECTS COMMENTS WE HAVE RECEIVED FROM MOST EGYPTIAN CONTACTS. COMMENTARY IS, HOWEVER, RESTRAINED ON LIKELIHOOD THAT US STATEMENTS WILL BE SUCCESSFUL IN ADVANCING PEACE PROCESS BY GETTING ISRAEL TO NEGOTIATING TABLE SOON. EGYPTIANS CONVENIENTLY DOWNPLAYING ARAB SHARE OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR SETTLEMENT, PRINCIPALLY CONCEPT OF NORAM RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL. ADDITIONALLY, IN PLENTIFUL PUBLIC REFERENCES TO PALESTINIAN ROLE IN SETTLEMENT AND EGYPTIAN/PLO COORDINATION, THERE NO OUTWARD SIGN THAT GOES ENCOURAGING POSITIVE PLO RESPONSE.

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Message Attributes

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